

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

- 1 1. An apparatus for managing an infrastructure comprising:
 - 2 a computer;
 - 3 a user interface communicably coupled to the computer;
 - 4 a database communicably coupled to the computer, the database containing two or
 - 5 more records, each record having a unique identifier and one or more data fields representing
 - 6 attributes of an asset or asset related item within the infrastructure, and all the records are
 - 7 linked to one another in a closed-loop hierarchical manner in accordance with one or more
 - 8 business rules; and
 - 9 a computer program embodied on a computer readable medium that is executed by
 - 10 the computer to manage the infrastructure using the database.
- 1 2. The apparatus as recited in claim 1, wherein the one or more data fields further
- 2 represent attributes of a sub-element for one or more assets.
- 1 3. The apparatus as recited in claim 1, wherein the attributes include an asset name,
- 2 manufacturer name, make, model number, serial number, description, purchase date,
- 3 expiration date, purchase cost or operating characteristics.
- 1 4. The apparatus as recited in claim 1, wherein the asset related items include places,
- 2 connections, contracts, documentation or financials.
- 1 5. The apparatus as recited in claim 4, wherein the places include physical sites or
- 2 locations.
- 1 6. The apparatus as recited in claim 4, wherein the connections include electrical
- 2 connections, physical connections, logical connections, communication links, interfaces,
- 3 junctions, circuits or patch panels.

1 7. The apparatus as recited in claim 4, wherein the contracts include leases, title
2 documents, maintenance contracts, license agreements, clients contracts, resource allocation
3 or service-level agreements.

1 8. The apparatus as recited in claim 4, wherein the documentation includes support
2 documents, maintenance schedules, procedural documentation, operational documentation or
3 policy documentation.

1 9. The apparatus as recited in claim 4, wherein the financials include purchase records,
2 repair records, warranties, operational costs, charge-backs or down-time costs.

1 10. The apparatus as recited in claim 1, wherein each record includes life cycle
2 information about the asset or asset related item.

1 11. The apparatus as recited in claim 1, wherein the one or more business rules define
2 how the assets and asset related items are interconnected or how one or more users use the
3 assets and asset related items or how one or more users use the information stored in the one
4 or more data fields associated with the assets and asset related items.

1 12. A method for managing an infrastructure comprising the steps of:
2 providing a database containing two or more records, each record having a unique
3 identifier and one or more data fields representing attributes of an asset or asset related item
4 within the infrastructure, and all the records are linked to one another in a closed-loop
5 hierarchical manner in accordance with one or more business rules;
6 processing one or more user requests to display or report information stored in the
7 database; and
8 updating the database as assets or asset related items are procured, implemented,
9 changed or disposed.

1 13. The method as recited in claim 12, further comprising the step of creating the
2 database.

1 14. The method as recited in claim 13, wherein the step of creating the database
2 comprises the steps of:

3 identifying one or more boundaries for the infrastructure;
4 identifying the assets within the boundaries;
5 identifying the items related to the assets;
6 determining the attributes associated with each asset and asset related item;
7 determining the business rules for how the assets and related items are linked
8 together; and
9 creating each record and storing the record in the database in a closed-loop
10 hierarchical manner in accordance with the business rules.

1 15. The method as recited in claim 14, further comprising the steps of:
2 determining one or more sub-elements for the assets and one or more attributes
3 associated with the sub-elements; and
4 determining one or more business rules for how the sub-elements and assets are
5 linked together.

1 16. The method as recited in claim 14, further comprising the step of identifying one or
2 more people who use the assets.

1 17. The method as recited in claim 14, further comprising the step of identifying one or
2 more people who use information about the asset.

1 18. The method as recited in claim 14, further comprising the step of designing data
2 display and report formats.

1 19. The method as recited in claim 14, further comprising the steps of:
2 identifying a managing agency; and
3 determining one or more goals for the managing agency.

1 20. A computer program embodied on a computer readable medium for managing an
2 infrastructure, the computer program comprising:
3 a code segment for providing a database containing two or more records, each record
4 having a unique identifier and one or more data fields representing attributes of an asset or
5 asset related item within the infrastructure, and all the records are linked to one another in a
6 closed-loop hierarchical manner in accordance with one or more business rules;
7 a code segment for processing one or more user requests to display or report
8 information stored in the database; and
9 a code segment for updating the database as assets or asset related items are procured,
10 implemented, changed or disposed.